

This comes on the heels of a New York Times piece that found 120,000 hours of terrorism-related recordings that have not even been translated by the FBI, this after this administration and the majority have repeatedly refused to appropriate the funds to hire the necessary translators.

We are seeing an administration unhinged from reality, with incompetence at the highest levels, incapable of prosecuting this war successfully. Their mistakes have put the lives of our valiant soldiers already serving in harm's way at even greater risk.

AMERICA NOT BEING MADE SAFER

(Mr. DeFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the administration says time and time again, as if that would make it so, that Americans are safer today. After all, they are spending \$10 billion to deploy a defective Star Wars system that has not been tested and could not hit missiles that will not be launched against us, and that makes us safer.

Yet our ports are wide open. Three percent of the containers coming into America will be inspected this year. That is the most likely route of a weapon of mass destruction to the United States, and we are only inspecting 3 percent of them, and 2 percent of the trucks coming across the Mexican border?

No one is going to shoot a missile at us, but they darn well might smuggle it in a truck or container and bring it in and detonate it in a city in the United States. And they are doing nothing about it.

They are doing nothing about plastic explosives being carried on to airplanes, even after the incidents in Russia. We have been warning them for 2 years that they are likely to take planes down. They are still doing nothing to detect plastic explosives at passenger checkpoints or keep people who clean the planes from secreting bombs on to the plane.

America is safer today? Maybe it is safer in an undisclosed location where DICK CHENEY is hiding out, but if it is not safer for average Americans.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 107, CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 802 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 802

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 107) making continuing appropriations for the

fiscal year 2005, and for other purposes. The joint resolution shall be considered as read for amendment. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the joint resolution equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my friend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 802 is a closed rule that provides for the consideration of H.J. Res. 107, a continuing resolution that will ensure ongoing appropriations for fiscal year 2005 until November 20, 2004, except for the Defense Department appropriations bill, which has already been enacted into law.

The rule provides for 1 hour of debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution and provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the last day of fiscal year 2004. At this point in time, there are a total of 12 regular appropriations bills that have not been enacted into law. Approving this CR will allow the Federal Government to continue its activities and operations for an additional 7 weeks.

To its credit, the House has passed 12 of the 13 regular appropriations bills. Unfortunately, the other body has passed only 5 regular appropriations bills and we need to pass a continuing resolution to allow the Federal Government to remain open while the House and Senate leadership, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, and the respective bodies work through the process of resolving their differences on the remaining 12 regular appropriations bills.

The underlying resolution, H.J. Res. 107, is designed to allow the many different Federal departments and agencies covered by those 12 outstanding bills to continue operating under the terms and conditions of their fiscal year 2004 appropriations bills, while generally not allowing for the initiation of new programs, activities or projects.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues in the House on both sides to join me in supporting this rule and the underlying CR.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. FROST asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, as my Republican friend and former colleague on the Committee on Rules, Porter Goss of Florida, once said about a continuing resolution, "Congress is failing to fulfill its obligation in a timely and responsible way, choosing to fall back on one CR after another instead of putting in the time to do our job." Or as he said on another occasion, "A continuing resolution erodes the credibility of the Congress."

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how much credibility this Republican Congress will have after we pass this continuing resolution and scurry off to our districts until November.

□ 1030

This Congress is unable to finish even its most basic duties, which is amazing, considering that the Republicans control both Chambers and the White House. Let us take a look at what we are leaving behind.

We have yet to pass a transportation bill to reduce congestion on our roads, reduce pollution in our air, or create new, good-paying jobs in our communities.

We have yet to pass legislation implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, to strengthen America's intelligence community, strengthen America's homeland security, and effectively fight terrorism around the globe.

We have yet to pass a higher education reauthorization bill to help students across America pursue a higher education.

And we have yet to pass the majority of our mandatory spending bills to fund the government for the next year. In fact, we have only passed one out of 13 appropriation bills through the entire Congress.

By refusing to stay in Washington and do our work our constituents sent us here to do, we are harming our economy, leaving our young students behind, and endangering the safety and security of this Nation.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the House spent the entire day debating and passing 38 suspension bills, including passing a bill to rename a river basin in Colorado and a number of bills to name several post offices around the country; and it has been that way for months. We spend more time naming post offices than doing the people's business and doing the work they sent us here to do. Our constituents expect us to fund this Nation's government, they expect us to pass a higher education bill to give our students the opportunity to pursue a college degree, a transportation bill to keep our highways being developed, and they certainly expect us to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission so that we can continue to wage the war on terror and keep our country safe.

But instead, Mr. Speaker, this Congress is taking the easy way out, leaving the hard work until after the election. I wonder, will this Congress be

able to finish its work even then. Truly, this has been a do-nothing Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STAND UP FOR THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend this House for having the courage to protect the sanctity of marriage.

In today's society, we find ourselves constantly fending off attacks aimed at the foundation of our Nation. Whether it is those that would take "in God we trust" off of our currency or "one Nation under God" out of our Pledge, we must stand up for the basic tenets on which this Nation was founded.

This week, Mr. Speaker, we continue our fight to defend one of the most basic institutions of our Nation: the traditional family.

It is true that the recognition of the family unit has traditionally been a State issue; but with the recent onslaught against the traditional family in our Nation, I believe it is now time for the Federal Government to act decisively.

As a cosponsor of H.J. Res. 106, I encourage my colleagues to stand up in defense of the traditional family and in defense of traditional marriage between one man and one woman.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3193, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 803 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 803

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3193) to restore second amendment rights in the District of Columbia. The bill shall be considered as read for amendment. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate on the bill, as amended, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Govern-

ment Reform; and (2) one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 803 is a closed rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 3193, the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act. The rule provides 1 hour of debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform.

The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill, and provides that the amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommend, with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3193 is a bipartisan measure sponsored by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER). The bill has 228 cosponsors from across the country, including 44 Democrats.

The bill simply permits law-abiding citizens of the District of Columbia to own firearms, a right currently denied them by act of the D.C. City Council. The Nation's capital has the toughest laws and regulations in the country prohibiting gun ownership by citizens. This bill would repeal the most onerous of those laws, thereby permitting individuals to protect themselves and their families in their own homes and otherwise enjoy privileges of gun ownership comparable to those enjoyed by most American citizens.

This bill would not affect any laws currently aimed at criminals and would place strict penalties on criminals who use guns to commit crimes. In addition, all penalties are doubled for illegal possession of a firearm in a "gun-free zone" within 1,000 feet of a school, day care center, college, or various youth facilities such as swimming pools and video arcades. Possession or use of a firearm while committing a crime of violence would remain punishable by up to 30 years in prison with a minimum 5 years served before eligibility for parole or probation.

Mr. Speaker, some have suggested that passage of H.R. 3193 may lead to an increase in violent crime, but I have to say that the facts suggest otherwise. Before the D.C. City Council imposed a handgun and home-defense ban in 1976, D.C.'s homicide rate had been declining. After the ban was instituted, how-

ever, D.C.'s homicide rate rose by more than 200 percent by 1991, while during the same period, the national homicide rate rose by just 12 percent. It is clear that this misguided and overly restrictive gun ban has not only failed to decrease violent crime in the District of Columbia, but it may have contributed to its increase. We have a chance today to do something about that.

So accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the so-called District of Columbia Personal Protection Act and to this closed rule.

Mr. Speaker, today the Republican leadership is, once again, letting the American people down by considering the wrong bill at the wrong time under the wrong circumstances. Once again, we are considering legislation in the shadow of the November elections. With 5 weeks to go until Election Day, the Republican leadership has put the country's agenda on hold in order to force an unnecessary vote on a bad and stupid bill. Once again, the Republican leadership is catering to the special interests at the expense of the public good; and once again, the Republican leadership is squandering the House's very limited time with this foolish, misguided, election-year legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we are just one day away from the end of the fiscal year, and only one, and I repeat, one, appropriation bill has been sent to the White House. Not only are the remaining 12 appropriations bills left on the table, not only has the House failed to complete consideration of all of the appropriations bills, but the Republican leadership, which controls both Houses of Congress, cannot even agree upon a budget.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership cannot get its act together on the highway bill, a bill that would create thousands of good-paying jobs. The Republican leadership cannot find the time to work on a bill to increase the minimum wage, even though wages are stagnant and over 4 million Americans have fallen out of the middle class and into poverty since George Bush became President. And the Republican leadership cannot even get its act together on the Department of Defense authorization or the FSC/ETI bill, each of which has languished in conference for months.

Mr. Speaker, as the House takes up this frivolous legislation today, the Republican leadership has yet to act on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission report.

□ 1045

Although the other body is working on legislation to implement the 9/11 report and the Democratic leader of this